

Assessment of the Pottery and Glass from Gracious Street Methodist Chapel, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire (OSA05 EV13)

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An archaeological evaluation at Gracious Street Methodist Chapel, Knaresborough, carried out by On-Site Archaeology Ltd produced a small quantity of pottery and post-medieval glassware. These finds were submitted for identification and assessment.

Description

Glass

Two fragments of a single dark green bottle of tall form were recorded from context 2003. This type was first produced in the mid 18th century and had been replaced by mould-blown vessels in the late 19th century.

Pottery

Medieval

Eight sherds of York Gritty ware (YG) were recorded. This ware was produced from Coal Measures light-firing clays and tempered with a gravel derived from Millstone Grit-type sandstone. It was made in West Yorkshire, probably at Potterton, from the mid 11th century until the mid 13th century. However, excavations on a rural settlement on the line of the A1 north of Wetherby suggest that it had been replaced by Northern Gritty wares (NGR) made closer to the site by the mid 12th century. These wares were also made from Carboniferous clays, but the iron content of the clay is higher and fragments of finer-grade sandstone are also present in the sand. Two sherds of Humberware (HUM) were also recorded. This ware was made from a red-firing, silty or fine sandy clay but was often fired in a reduced atmosphere, producing a grey fabric. Production sites for Humberware existed at York (where it is known as Walmgate Ware), Holme-upon-Spalding Moor and West Cowick ({Hayfield 1992 #4843}; {Vince 2005 #45983}; {Vince & Steane 2005 #46273}). Thin section and chemical analysis of the Humberware from the A1 site suggests that it was produced from Quaternary clay, possibly at York but possibly from another source, presumably closer to the site. Potters are recorded working in Knaresborough forest, but it is uncertain what types were produced there or what raw materials they were made from ({Le Patourel 1968 #46303}).

Most of the sherds came from jars (Table 1) with four coming from jugs.

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Table 1

cname	JAR	JUG	Grand Total
HUM	1	1	2
NGR	1	3	4
YG	8		8
Grand Total	10	4	14

Post-Medieval

Twenty-six sherds of post-medieval pottery were recorded (Table 2). The types present certainly span the mid 17th to the mid 18th century in date whilst some might date to the later 16th century (BL, CSTN, FREC, GRE, LHUM, RYEDALE) although all of these wares continued in production into the 17th century. The majority of the types present could have been produced in Yorkshire but a small quantity of non-local English wares (such as press-moulded, embossed ware and Mottled ware from Staffordshire) and imported wares (Frechen and Westerwald stonewares) were also present. The range of forms present includes those used in food preparation, storage, drinking and dining, together with a possible fragment of chamber pot.

Of particular note is a complete crucible, probably made from a graphite-tempered clay. This crucible has been used and has green corrosion products adhering to it, suggesting that it was used to melt a copper alloy. Such vessels were widely used in the post-medieval period (an example was recorded by the authors from Holy Trinity Church Goodramgate) but it is rare to find complete examples.

Table 2

cname	BOWL	CHPT?	CUP	DJ	HANDLED JAR	JUG	PLATE	Grand Total
BL	5							5
CSTN			5					5
FREC				1				1
GRE	6							6
LHUM						1		1
NOTS	1							1
RYEDALE	2				2			4
STEM							1	1
STMO	1							1
WEST		1						1
Grand Total	15	1	5	1	2	1	1	26

Early Modern

Sixteen sherds of late 18th-century or later date were recorded (Table 3). Most of these are refined wares whose source is difficult to determine (CREA, ENDS, PEAR, TPW) but they include four sherds of Sunderland coarseware, which was produced in the north east of

England and exported alongside Sunderland lustrewares and other finewares. The Nottingham Stoneware and some of the blackwares included here as being post-medieval might also be contemporary with these early modern wares. The range of forms present include those used for liquid storage, food preparation and dining (the most common form).

Table 3

cname	BOTTLE	BOWL	JUG	PLATE	Grand Total
CREA			1	2	3
ENGS	1				1
PEAR				2	2
SUND		3		1	4
TPW		1	1	4	6
Grand Total	1	4	2	9	16

Assessment

The evaluation consisted of two trenches, 1 and 2. The pottery includes a small quantity of medieval and late medieval types but all were recovered from later deposits. They might indicate occupation on the site in the medieval period but could equally have been brought onto the site at a later period. None of the sherds joined and the mean size of the earlier types (YG and NGR) was less than 10gm.

Trench 1

The earliest feature revealed in trench 1 was a stone wall. Deposits on either side of the wall, post-dating it, could not be correlated and produced a small quantity of pottery (Table 4). To the southwest, the only deposit to produce pottery was 1003, which can be dated to the later 18th century or later. To the northeast, context 1007 is the earliest pottery-producing layer and this produced a sherd of medieval pottery (YG). This deposit was partially removed by a recent drain and the backfill over the drain, 1006, produced another small collection of late 18th-century or later pottery. However, since the deposit also produced pieces of plastic, these finds are clearly residual.

Table 4

Context	cname	BOTTLE	BOWL	JAR	JUG	PLATE	Grand Total
1007	YG				1		1
1003	CREA					2	2
	ENGS		1				1
	PEAR					1	1
1006	BL		2				2
	CREA				1		1
	HUM				1		1
	PEAR					1	1

RYEDALE	1			1
SUND			1	1
TPW	1	1	4	6

Trench 2

This trench reached natural reddish brown clay, over which was a deposit interpreted as a horticultural soil (2004). This soil produced a collection of medieval and post-medieval pottery, in which the latest type present was a fragment of Westerwald Stoneware which might come from a chamber pot, a form which is most common in the mid 18th century. A sherd of Staffordshire Mottled ware is also likely to be of 18th-century date.

This soil was sealed by a layer of reddish brown clay sand (2003) which produced a small assemblage of pottery which includes sherds of Sunderland Coarseware and a Nottingham Stoneware bowl, together with the two fragments of glass bottle. These finds suggest a late 18th or early 19th-century date for the deposit. The range of forms present in these two deposits includes vessels used in food preparation, a possible chamber pot, drinking and dining.

Table 5

Context	cname	BOWL	CHPT?	CUP	CRUC	DJ	HANDLED JAR	JAR	JUG	PLATE	TALL	Grand Total
2004	BL	3										3
	CSTN			5								5
	FREC					1						1
	GRE	5										5
	HAMB							1				1
	HUM							1				1
	LHUM								1			1
	NGR							1	3			4
	RYEDALE	1					1					2
	STEM									1		1
	STMO	1										1
	WEST			1								1
	YG								7			7
2003	GRAPH				1							1
	GRE	1										1
	NOTS	1										1
	PMGL										2	2
	RYEDALE						1					1
SUND	3										3	

Further work

The only find of intrinsic interest from the site is the graphite-tempered crucible. This should be drawn, photographed and x-rayed, to establish whether any fragments of metal survive in the slag which adheres to the vessel. Given the complete condition of the crucible, analysis of its fabric is not recommended, but if further work takes place on the site then the possible presence of metalworking debris and further crucible fragments should be borne in mind.

Table 6

Task	Description	Unit Cost	Quantity	Amount
1	Illustration of crucible	£15.00	1	£15
2	Photograph of crucible	£25.00	1	£25
3	Research and report	£23.50	1	£24
Total				£64
VAT				£11.11
Grand Total				£74.61

Retention

The finds from stratified deposits should be retained for potential future study and the crucible could be considered for display.

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cname	subfabric	full name	period	earliest date	latest date	Broad source	Narrow source	source	bibliography	Sherds	Vessels	Wt(gm)
BL		Black-glazed wares	pmed	1500	1750	England	various	various		5	4	158
CREA		Creamware	emod	1765	1830	England	Staffordshire			3	2	12
CSTN		Cistercian ware	pmed	1500	1650	England	Gloucestershire		{Mainman 1993 #20763}, 591	5	5	28
ENGS		Unspecified English Stoneware	emod	1750	1900	England	nk	? numerous sources	Mainman 1993, 665	1	1	32
FREC		Frechen stoneware	pmed	1530	1680	Germany	Rhineland	Frechen/Cologne	Mainman 1993, 591	1	1	10
GRAPH		Graphite-tempered crucibles	Pmed	1550	1900	Germany				1	1	133
GRE		Glazed Red Earthenware	pmed	1500	1650	England	various	various		6	6	173
HAMB		Hambleton ware	Med	1350	1550	England	North Yorkshire		Mainman 1993, 590	1	1	10
HUM		Humberware	lmed	1250	1500	England	Humber Estuary	various	Mainman 1993, 590	2	2	40
LHUM		Late Humber ware	emod	1550	1850	England	Yorkshire	Unknown		1	1	113
NGR		Northern Gritty ware	med	1150	1350	England	Yorkshire	Various		4	4	40
NOTS		Nottingham stoneware	pmed	1690	1900	England	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham	Mainman 1993, 665	1	1	64
PEAR		Pearl ware	emod	1770	1900	England	Staffordshire/Bristol	various		2	2	5
PMGL	DARK GREEN	Post-Medieval glass	pmed	1550	2000	England	Various	Various		2	1	304
RYEDALE		Ryedale ware	pmed	1550	1700	England	Yorkshire	inc Stearsby	Mainman 1993, 665	4	4	178
STEM		Staffordshire embossed slipware	pmed	1650	1720	England	Staffordshire/Bristol	various		1	1	14
STMO		Staffordshire/Bristol mottled-glazed	pmed	1690	1800	England	Staffordshire			1	1	7
SUND		Sunderland coarseware	pmed	1800	1900	England	North-East	Sunderland	Mainman 1993, 665	4	4	104
TPW		Transfer printed ware	emod	1770	1900	England	Staffordshire	? numerous		6	6	29

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								sources			
WEST	Westerwald stoneware	pmed	1600	1800	Germany	Rhineland	Westerwald	1	1	2	
YG	Yorkshire gritty ware	sn- emed	1050	1250	England	Yorkshire/North	Mainman 1993, 585;{Watkins 1991 #46263}, 78, 87	8	8	33	
ZDATE	General context date	na	0	0	na	na	na	5	5	0	

Appendix 1

Context	class	cname	Form	Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use	earliest date
1003	POTTERY	CREA	PLATE		BS	2	1	8			1765
1003	POTTERY	ENGS	BOTTLE		BS	1	1	32			1750
1003	POTTERY	PEAR	PLATE		BS	1	1	3			1770
1006	POTTERY	SUND	PLATE		R	1	1	11			1800
1006	POTTERY	HUM	JUG		BS	1	1	34			1250
1006	POTTERY	TPW	JUG		BS	1	1	8			1770
1006	POTTERY	CREA	JUG		B	1	1	4			1765
1006	POTTERY	RYEDALE	BOWL		R	1	1	30			1550
1006	POTTERY	PEAR	PLATE	HAND PAINTED	BS	1	1	2			1770
1006	POTTERY	BL	BOWL		B	2	2	30			1500
1006	POTTERY	TPW	BOWL		BS	1	1	2			1770
1006	POTTERY	TPW	PLATE		R;BS	4	4	19			1770
1007	POTTERY	YG	JAR		BS	1	1	4			1050
2003	PMGL	PMGL	TALL		B	2	1	304			1550
2003	POTTERY	SUND	BOWL		R;BS	3	3	93			1800
2003	POTTERY	GRE	BOWL		BS	1	1	31			1500
2003	POTTERY	RYEDALE	HANDLED JAR	SHL=2004	H	1	1	26	ABRA		1550
2003	POTTERY	NOTS	BOWL		B	1	1	64			1690
2003	GRAPHITE?	GRAPH	CRUC		B	1	1	133			1550

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2004	POTTERY	FREC	DJ		BS	1	1	10		1530
2004	POTTERY	GRE	BOWL		BS	2	2	24		1500
2004	POTTERY	GRE	BOWL	HORIZONTAL HANDLE	H	1	1	72		1500
2004	POTTERY	GRE	BOWL		R;BS	2	2	46	ABRA	1500
2004	POTTERY	CSTN	CUP		BS	1	1	1		1500
2004	POTTERY	CSTN	CUP	WHITE CLAY DEC, WITH INCISED LINES	BS	4	4	27		1500
2004	POTTERY	RYEDALE	BOWL		BS	1	1	6	ABRA	1550
2004	POTTERY	RYEDALE	HANDLED JAR	SHL=2003	R;H	1	1	116	ABRA	1550
2004	POTTERY	STEM	PLATE		BS	1	1	14		1650
2004	POTTERY	WEST	CHPT?		BS	1	1	2		1600
2004	POTTERY	STMO	BOWL		R	1	1	7		1690
2004	POTTERY	HUM	JAR		BS	1	1	6		1250
2004	POTTERY	NGR	JAR		BS	1	1	7		1150
2004	POTTERY	NGR	JUG		BS	3	3	33		1150
2004	POTTERY	LHUM	JUG		B	1	1	113		1550
2004	POTTERY	YG	JAR		BS	7	7	29		1050
2004	POTTERY	HAMB	JUG		BS	1	1	10		1350
2004	POTTERY	BL	BOWL		B	3	2	128		1500